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THE DAWN OF REASON; OR, MENTAL TRAITS IN THE LOWER ANIMALS. By JAMES WEIR, JR., M.D. New York: The Macmillan Co.; London: Macmillan & Co., Ltd., 1899. Pp. xiii + 234. \$1.25.

MODERN science is nowhere confronted with more fascinating and yet baffling problems than those which lie along the borderland of psychology and biology. The nature and origin of instinct, its development and the limits of its function, the appearance of consciousness and the ratiocinative processes in connection with the evolution of organic forms—these and a score of kindred questions are all indigent here. The solution of these problems promises to affect so many important human interests, especially those of an ethical and religious character, that any book dealing with the subject in intelligible language is certain to gain a hearing. Dr. Weir's book is, therefore, assured a public, for its untechnical descriptions of the author's observations on the phenomena of animal life and mind will appeal to a large circle of readers.

To cope with these problems successfully, however, requires the training of an expert in both biology and psychology. Dr. Weir is clearly unversed in the best of modern psychology, and his knowledge of biology, which represents his specialty, has not prevented his making serious errors even in that direction. But the general reader does not so much need to be guarded against the occasional misstatements of fact, as against the general interpretative attitude of the author toward his facts. In this respect his position is distinctly antiquated and out of touch with contemporary standards for such work. For example, he repeatedly finds, in his study of the simpler animal organisms, evidence which he regards as demonstrating conclusively their possession of conscious intelligence, whereas in reality his facts prove nothing beyond the presence and activity of physiological mechanisms of adjustment. Similarly, he finds proof of the existence in certain animals of rational activities closely akin to human reason. His demonstration of this is based upon events susceptible of quite other and simpler interpretation. At every point he shows himself possessed of an amiable credulity, which is one of the last qualifications for an investigator in this field.

The unquestionable tendency of the best modern work is to seek the explanation of animal activities formerly supposed to involve reasoning, in processes of an essentially accidental and random character, or in those originating from mere instinct. In the same way

the tendency is to throw back upon purely mechanical neural processes the explanation of activities previously regarded as indicative of highly elaborate conscious instincts. In passing, it may be said that this disposition of modern science, which is so unwelcome to much of prevalent sentiment, because it seems to depreciate the sacred mystery of animal life and conduct, represents no passing materialistic whim, but is based upon the best obtainable evidence.

Readers of Dr. Weir's book get no suggestion of this tendency, and in so far are misled as to the latest relevant scientific doctrines. After all, this does not prevent the author from coming out at the end with a conclusion essentially that of the current psychology of the day, *i. e.*, that the consciousness of animals differs from human consciousness in no assignable particular, beyond that of extent and complexity in development.

Dr. Weir writes with an enthusiasm which is contagious, and the critic's task is thereby rendered doubly ungracious.

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INSTINCT AND REASON: An Essay concerning the Relation of Instinct to Reason, with some Special Study of the Nature of Religion. By HENRY RUTGERS MARSHALL, M.A. New York: The Macmillan Co., 1898. Pp. xiii + 574. \$3.50.

THIS is one of the most stimulating of philosophical treatises which have appeared in recent years. Its attractiveness is due, first, to the breadth of the inquiry, which embraces the study of living beings from the lowest forms to man; secondly, to the thoroughgoing adoption of the doctrine of development whereby the life of man is involved in and explicable in relation to the life of all other organisms; thirdly, to its discussion of all this field from the biological point of view as distinguished from the dogmatic or speculative; and, fourthly, to its inclusion of the problem of religion in the field of discussion and its attempt at the solution of the problem by the method employed to solve other problems of life, as indicated above.

The author tells us that his first purpose was to expound his view of religion as an instinctive element of man's nature. But in connection with this he was led to make a thorough study of instinct in general and its relation to other elements in organic life. From this he was led to the exposition of the relations of instinct and reason and of the connection of religion and morality. This essay of over five